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GENERAL

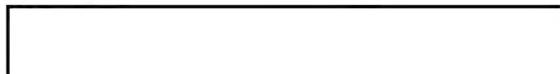
1. Soviet official links Korean and Austrian issues:

In an informal conversation with Western representatives, the Soviet deputy political adviser in Austria flatly stated that a Korean agreement must be concluded before an Austrian treaty could be signed. He said that the USSR would be at a great disadvantage if subsequent to withdrawal of its forces from Austria an extension of the Far East conflict resulted in Soviet involvement in a general war.

He stressed the importance of restoring mutual confidence, adding that an Austrian peace treaty could then be settled easily.

Comment: The USSR may well exploit a Korean stalemate as a convenient excuse for further stalling on an Austrian peace treaty and other major issues.

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WESTERN EUROPE

5. French say proposed strategy on Austrian treaty would play into Soviet hands:

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High French foreign ministry officials state that Western efforts to obtain a revision of the economic concessions granted the USSR in Article 35 of the old Austrian treaty draft

would give the Russians a "golden opportunity" to blame the West if the treaty negotiations fail, as is expected. Since the Austrian question has been played up as a test of Soviet good faith, the entire Western position with respect to the Soviet "peace" offensive could be profoundly affected by such a development.

Comment: Both London and Vienna have accepted a new American proposal calling for withdrawal of the short treaty draft and for strenuous efforts to revise Article 35, and France can be expected to agree reluctantly. Foreign Minister Gruber also appears to be uneasy about this approach and has urged that the question of revision be delayed until the Soviet position has been probed as far as possible.

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7. Bidault may suggest four-power talks on disarmament:

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French Foreign Minister Bidault plans to present to the United States and Britain a note on the relation of disarmament to four-power negotiations on German unification.

He will include a suggestion that the West ask the USSR promptly for a conference on disarmament.

Bidault does not believe the Russians will disarm, and his proposal is meant to counter a possible Soviet request for a conference on German unification.

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Bidault reportedly feels such a Soviet move would end all possibility of EDC ratification by the French Parliament, but foresees no difficulty for ratification if the USSR should refuse to participate in a disarmament conference.

Comment: At the 25 April tripartite meeting in Paris, Bidault urged four-power talks with disarmament first on the agenda as a means of forestalling a possible Soviet offer to discuss a unified, neutralized Germany. The USSR would be likely to accept such a proposal for propaganda purposes.

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